



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

City of San Diego
Planning & Development Review
Building Development Review
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Building Newsletter 18-3

Geotechnical Reports

Interpretations of State and Local Building Codes
1998 California Building Code: Chapter 18
Revision Date: July 1999

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I. Purpose

This building newsletter summarizes department policies and procedures related to geotechnical reports. The purpose of this newsletter is to provide information about the types of geotechnical reports the city requires and which report is appropriate for your project.

II. Types of Reports

Different types of geotechnical reports are required by the city depending upon the nature of the project being permitted. The type of report required will vary with the project's location, geologic conditions, site grading, proposed use, number of stories, type of foundation and numerous other factors. When planning new construction, inquire on the 3rd floor in the Planning & Development Review Department, 1222 First Avenue, which type of report is needed for your specific project. Since some reports require considerable time to prepare, which could delay obtaining your permit, it is best to determine which reports are needed during the planning phase of your project. Each report must be signed by a registered civil engineer and/or geologist.

The following types of geotechnical reports are required by the city of San Diego:

1. Preliminary Soil Report
2. Geologic Reconnaissance Report
3. Geologic Investigation Report
4. As-Graded Report
5. Deep Foundation Report

Refer to the "*Technical Guidelines for Geotechnical Reports*" manual for complete descriptions of each type of report. The manual is available at the 3rd floor Publications Sales area and at the 2nd floor Maps and Records counter in the Planning & Development Review Department, 1222 First Avenue.

III. Preliminary Soil Report

An initial geotechnical investigation conducted to evaluate existing site conditions in order to obtain general soil and stability information is commonly referred to as a Preliminary Soil Investigation. The results of such an investigation will produce a *Preliminary Soil Report*. This basic report is recommended for all projects involving grading, new foundations, major site improvements or significant alteration to existing structures involving foundation work. This report is also referred to as a Preliminary Geotechnical Investigation Report.

IV. Geologic Report

A Geologic report is occasionally required for a project when applying for a permit. The need for a report depends upon the level of risk associated with the project, based on such things as building height, intended use, occupancy load, proposed grading, or storage of hazardous materials, and the type of geologic hazard suspected at the site.

There are two types of geologic reports, a preliminary study called a *Geologic Reconnaissance Report*, and an in-depth study called a *Geologic Investigation Report*. The *Geologic Reconnaissance Report* is required for minor projects or when the level of risk is considered low due to the suspected geologic hazard mapped at the site. This report generally includes a visit to the site and a review of available records, maps and photographs that might provide information about the geotechnical conditions at the site. When there is a higher risk, such as when a fault or landslide is suspected nearby or when the reconnaissance finds evidence of a significant hazard on the site, a *Geologic Investigation Report* may be required. This report generally includes field work, such as mapping and excavations, and analyses of the geologic structure.

In order to determine which geologic report is required, refer to the San Diego Seismic Safety Study. This study consists of a series of maps and tables which enable you to determine if a geologic report is required for your project. These maps are available for your use on the 3rd floor and may be purchased on the 2nd floor Maps and Records counter in the Planning & Development Review Department, 1222 First Avenue. They are also available for use at the Field Inspection Services office at 9601 Ridgehaven Court, Suite 220, all Neighborhood Service Centers and the larger city libraries.

V. As-Graded Report

An *As-Graded Report* is required for all sites where grading has been performed. This type of report addresses the placement of cuts and fills, compaction of soils, expansion potential, drainage, slope stability and any mitigation that may have been performed to prepare the site for construction. Such reports are required at the conclusion of grading and will act to verify that all site work has been performed per the approved plans and the recommendations of the Preliminary Soil Report. This report is also referred to as a Fill Control Report or Compaction Report.

VI. Deep Foundation Report

This type of report is required at the completion of any foundation which includes piles or caissons for which a Special Inspection is required. Installation of deep foundations is subject to continuous observation by a licensed Deep Foundation Special Inspector and review by the Engineer of Record for the project. Both the Special

Inspector and the Engineer of Record shall verify that the installation of the deep foundation was performed in accordance with the geotechnical requirements of the permitted plans and specifications.

A Deep Foundation Report is not intended to be in lieu of special inspection reports for concrete inspection or welding inspection requirements.